

ON THE
DEATH
OF
Mr. Edmund Smith,
Late Student of *Christ-Church, Oxon.*
A
POEM,
IN
MILTONIC VERSE.

*Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus
Tam chari Capitis?*

L O N D O N,
Printed for J. Morphew near Stationers-Hall, 1712.

Price Six-pence.

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P O E M

IN

MILTONIC VERSE

Some delirious in garden and woods
I am about Copied?

L O N D O N

Printed for J. Moxon near Station-Hall, 1711.

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P R E F A C E.



Have often wondred that *Milton*, who was the greatest Genius of the last Age, if not equal to the most Celebrated of Antiquity, should have so Few Imitators, amidst such a Multitude of Authors of all Kinds, who aim at a Reputation in Poetry, and some of them capable of the most finish'd Undertakings. Poets of the finest Taste are the most proper, though the most Difficult to be imitated, and there

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is, methinks, a sort of laudable Ambition in the doing it, tho' we fall very short of the Original. He who follows a Muse that is always Groveling and Jaded, may be pretty sure of floundring in the Mud : Impotence or Extravagance of Imagination, Error of Judgment, or any other Imperfections whatsoever, are so far from being amended, by Reading or Copying after Authors, liable to the same Exceptions, that they are establish'd and increas'd.

Every one indeed ought to be copy'd in his Excellencies, but avoided in his Mistakes, and if we consider in what *Milton* excell'd, we may find Scope enough for the Exercise of the most Luxuriant Fancy, without Distortion or Confinement, and with this Advantage to our selves, that if we imitate the very worst of him, we can scarce be led into a Fault. He was undoubtedly a perfect Master of the Classics, his Connections and Transitions, the Majesty of his Idea's, and the Loftiness of his

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his Diction, the Vastness of his Argument, and the Transposition of his Words, which in our Language is peculiar only to himself, carry in them something so inimitably fine and graceful, that so nearly resembles the Politeſt of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, that none but the Politeſt of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, can preſume to parallel. His Epithets are plac'd in ſuch a Manner, that the meaneſt Reader, though he knows nothing of the Beauties, muſt lay the Emphaſis as he ought. His obſolete Words are ſo far from being Vitious, that they are highly commendable ; and to write *Miltonic* in the Modiſh Expreſſions of the preſent Age, would be like drawing the Picture of Queen *Elizabeth* in a Modern Dreſs, which, though her Perſon be ſtill the ſame, would give her a very different Air, and make ſome ſeeming Alteration in the very Lineaments of her Face. But if we reflect more narrowly on the extenſive Fulneſs, the Strength, the Sinews,

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of

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of the compound and de-compound Epithets and Words in *Spencer* and Others in that Age, so well plac'd, as I have hinted, in Blank Verse, it may be no ill Conclusion to suppose we have alter'd our Poetical Language for the Worse: Nor is it hard to conjecture, this might be *Milton's* Reason for using such Phrases as were old fashion'd even in his time. Besides, his Residence abroad, and his adopting several significant Latin Phrases into our Language, may induce us further to believe he had imbib'd the Notions of some of our Neighbours, who make a considerable Difference, and perhaps very justly, between the Language of their Poetry and Prose. Sentiments that are exquisitely noble and sublime, cannot but be debas'd, when deliver'd in a Style that is impotent and insipid; That Vigour, that comely Manliness which gives a Lustre to heroic Numbers, must lose it self extreamly, when cloath'd in a Dress improper and unbecoming: Nor has
Rhime

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Rhyme been the least Occasion of this Alteration, since some of our strongest Epithets can never be introduc'd into that way of Writing, without murdering the Softness of a Cadence, or the Harmony of a Sound. One of our most refin'd Writers tells us, there is a Variety of Sexes in Poetry, a Masculine and a Feminine Muse; and however they may have their peculiar Beauties, yet if the first is to be preferr'd to the last, our Fore-fathers, I am perswaded, generally speaking, must be enroll'd in that Class. Their Language was rough, strong and nervous, agreeable to the Manners and Sentiments of the Age they liv'd in, and I wish, by endeavouring to polish and refine it, we don't degenerate into a sort of Poetical Effeminacy. The Poets of our own Age must be allow'd to write more delicate and correct, but those of the former more full and more expressive: There is a sort of a melting Tenderness in ours that perswades, but an Authoritative Ma-

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Majesty in theirs that commands, Attention ; Ours, gently warm the Imagination, but theirs, like Lightning, in an Instant, strike us with a certain Energy and Violence.

I have enlarg'd the more upon this Head, because I find an Hint in one of the * *Spectators*, as if he took the Old Phrases to be a Blemish in *Milton* and his Followers ; an Author indeed, whom tho' I cannot concur with in this Particular, I have no less an Esteem for, than any one, who has any Relish of Letters, ought to have for a Person of the Politest Wit, accompany'd with the most solid Judgment.

The Subject of the following Poem is truly great and noble, since whoever was acquainted with the Character or Writings of Mr. *Smith*, must needs allow him to be Master of all those Perfections that render a Man compleat : He had all the Advantages that Nature or Art could bestow on him, and perhaps there was hardly any Man, in any Age

* Vide Spect. No. 140.

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Age or any Nation, who was endow'd with a greater Capacity or brighter Parts, who was better qualify'd for the most elaborate Composures, or had made a more solid Improvement of his Reason. He deserv'd a Monument, and had had one too, had he been honour'd as his Friend Mr. *Philips* was, with a Patron of the same Liberality and Munificence.

I could wish some of his more intimate Acquaintance, and who are better capable than my self, of doing Justice to the Dignity of his Memory, would undertake this Province ; mean while, I have this Satisfaction, that I have endeavour'd to do the Office of a Friend, by paying a sort of Tribute to his Ashes.

As to the Poem, it was compos'd soon after the Death of this incomparable Man, tho' there have been some small Additions made to it since, as the Reader may perceive. The Reasons for its coming out so late, are the same

as

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as for its coming out at all : Had it not been got into the Hands of a Bookseller it had still lay buried in the same Obscurity, it was at first design'd, or had not the Bookseller been too honest to Publish it without the Author's Knowledge, it might have been Publish'd with more Imperfections than it is at present. As it is, I submit it to the Judgment of the World, being very little concern'd at the frivolous Objections that may be rais'd against it by some Persons, who notwithstanding their Pretences to Criticism are no less qualify'd to censure or approve, than Justice, painted among the Thebans, to execute her Office, without either Hands or Eyes.





ON THE
DEATH
OF
Mr. Edmund Smith.



HALT Thou, O Bard Divine, who
e'rewhile sung
In doleful Plaint, the hapless final
Doom,

Of *Philips*, bright Companion of thy Hours;

C

Whether

Whether, or Days, or Nights, in social Cups,
 Ye past, or studious Musing, fertile of Lays
 Congenial, and various-measur'd Sounds :
 And Thou, on whom the Heav'nly Powers
 bestow'd
 A vein Benign of Wit, Thought unconfin'd,
 Despising shackled Rhyme ; Thou, Thou, O

Philips !

Wou'd, Redivive, e'er this repay'd his Metre,
 Mindful of Friendship past, e'er this adorn'd
 His Tomb, in Numbers, flowing as thy Tears.
 Shalt Thou, O Bard Divine, then die unsung ?
 Unheeded, Unlamented, shalt Thou want
 Some tributary grateful Muse, full-fumm'd
 To blazon-broad in Elegiack Song
 Thy Worth, and eternise thy Name diffusive ?

Pardon,

Pardon, O generous Ghost, Attempt Vain-
 Glorious;
 Already Thou hast liv'd enough, hast liv'd
 To celebrate thy self, Proof as a Rock
 Of Adamant unmov'd, 'gainst all Assaults
 Of utter Hate envenom'd, Time, sworn Foe
 To Song-attempting Author, Poet Modern;
 Hast liv'd by thine own Hand, Nor Friends, nor
 Foes,

Augment, Officious, or decrease thy Fame
 Firm-fix'd, distinguish'd only by thy Theme.

Hypolitus Elate declares thy Praise

In loud Acclaim, among the Shades below,
 His joyful Sentiments expresses, vaunts
 His happy State, first introduc'd by You

On *British* Theatre: Not *Philip's* Son
 More pleas'd, when at *Pelide's* Tomb he stood
 Greedy of Glory, nor with the Universe
 Content; had he obtain'd his darling With,
 And Sire *Mæonides* his mighty Feats
 Of Arms, in never-dying Verse recorded.
 Thus shall he live, be thus deliver'd down
 To After-Time, drawn to the Life, he seems
 Himself, nor his own Native Dress becomes
 Him more: *Euripides, Seneca, Racine,*
 Nor boast superior Merit: *Greece, Latium, Gaul,*
 Confess thy up-grown Genius, over-peering,
 And Ostentatious share the second Honours.

But yet, my Muse, tho' conscious of her Weakness,
 Nor fit, nor worthy, to Thee, O *Smith* respectful,

And

And prompted by her Grief, Assays, else Mute,
 O bold, O hard Assay ! to tell thy Virtues
 In Words of pure Affect ; her Sighs in-pent
 Burst out in Floods of Tears, as River damm'd,
 Impetuous Torrent, Uncontroul'd; full Force
 At length collecting, loudly Roaring, breaks
 Down Banks, imprisoning Mound, Infuriate,
 And sweeping all Oppose, o'erturns, o'erwhelms,
 With Inundation wild, the Country waste.

Methought I ken'd the Reverend Shade of
Bodley,

When thou declaim'st Solennial on his Deeds,
 Rise from the darksome Grave, with Aspect stern,
 Awful, and Rigid, tho' with Sweetness mixt,
 Majestic, Grave, and Philosophic Leer,

Omen

Omen of instant Joy, Methought I heard
 Thus his Approve the solemn Sage Announce.

‘ Well hast Thou spoke, O Youth mature, well
 learn’t,
 ‘ The moving Art of Rhetoric, the Native Force
 ‘ Of *Greek* and *Roman* Diction, well art skill’d,
 ‘ In ought becoming *Pathos*, Elocution,
 ‘ Bland, Dulcet ; strong as disgusted Patriot,
 ‘ Haranging Senate, but so smooth at Will,
 ‘ As the entangling *Syren*’s artful Notes ;
 ‘ Or Favourite, deluding of his Prince,
 ‘ Fawning with humil Cringe, and accent Bland,
 ‘ And dropping *Manna* from his flattering Tongue.
 ‘ Pleas’d, I must own I am, to see my Boon
 ‘ Of Academic Books improve, bring forth

‘ Such

' Such good Produce, blind *Melesigines*,
 ' The *Mantuan* Bard, *Demosthenes*, and *Tully*,
 ' Are drawn at large in Thee, and cent'ring meet.
 ' But Time will come, alas, too soon 'twill come,
 ' When Thou, prone-tending to the Grave, art
 snatch'd,
 ' O Loss, invaluable, irrecoverable!
 ' Nor silver *A——ch* long survives, but leaves
 ' A Name Immortal as his Deeds, succeeded
 (And happy 'tis to be succeeded thus)
 ' By *Att——y*, Bright, Wise Governor,
 ' Vers'd in all human Knowledge, and all Arts,
 ' And All in every Art excelling; Him except,
 ' Whom Convocations future shall admire
 ' For Fluency of Tongue, and equal Learning,
 ' Consummate *Sm——ge* ! Still, still deserving

' Greater

' Greater Dignity, O excellent Divine !
 ' To Thee *Oxonia* Bows, Thee, Church and State,
 ' Hold in the highest Rank of just Esteem :
 ' By Thee, instructed, taught from Regal Chair,
 ' Out-sets the young Divine, well-fraught, and
 gains
 ' Conquest o'er far and near, o'er monstrous Sects,
 ' That swarm, and over-spread the Land with
 Error,
 ' Worfe than *Cymmerian* Darknefs, horrid Shade.

Cou'd Ought, Polite, Refin'd, stave off th' Approach
 Of grisly Death agast, with griping Paw,
 Hideous to Sight, O *Smith*, thou still had'st liv'd,
 Still had'st Thou run'd thy Lays, near *London's*
 Sear,

To winding *Thames* Contiguous, *Fulham* Shoar :
 There had'st Thou giv'n Attest of Judgment,
 Candour,
 And Vigorous Turn of Thought, of Wit Facete,
 Luxuriant, Chast, Uncommon, and Refin'd
 From vulgar Dross, Horatian Sneer Attendant
 On Banter, Glee, the Life of Conversation.
 There had'st Thou try'd thy Muse in keen Invektive,
 With pointed Shafts of Satyr, Dorian Lyric
 Gay, Humorous, or Judicious Epic
 Best for Instruction form'd, or Epigram
 With nibbling Twitch, or Pompous Sound Dramatic,
 Or Boiling *Pindar's* Odes, or odd Burlesque,
 The Mimic *Zani* Muse that postures all ;
 Perfect in each of these a Genius deem'd.
 And well might perfect be, in *Longine's* Arms
 Indulgent, foster'd, sucking Knowledge exact

From Precept pure, as *Heliconian* Streams
 Mellifluous, and forming Judgment true;
 From whence both Gods and Men are taught to
 speak.

What might we not expect from Thee, O *Smith* !
 What nice Corrections, and what Censure just
 On Faults, and not on Men, on Scriblers Vile,
 Modern in Thought, in Dress, and Error foul ?
 How woud'st Thou've taught the World to Think,
 to Write,

To Speak ? Retriev'd that Eloquence Divine,
 Which mov'd the wild *Democracies* at Will,
 Of *Rome*, or *Athens*, or to Peace, or War :
 O *Smith* ! at once our Critic, and Example.
 All this, Thou'd'st done, and more than Thought
 can reach,

Or Words can tell, Inimitable Bard !

(II)

Had not untimely Fate Thy Days abridg'd
Relentless, and our Growing Hopes deceiv'd.
So fares th' Embofom'd Rose, in radiant Morn,
Disclofing Blufhes to the Beams Titanic :
O Beauteous fcented Foliage, fhort-liv'd Plant !
Nor all the live-long Day furvives, but crop'd
By fome fair Virgin's Hand, confuming Droops
Within her tender Bosom, and decays.

O that fome *Chrift-Church* Bard, Foundation
fam'd,
In Godlike Rapture, like thy Own, wou'd fmg
Thy Deftiny ; or fome New-born Mufe arife
Inspir'd with Harmony Celestial, Offspring
Of Thy furviving Genius, Fire Paternal
Inheriting : So th' *Arabian Bird*

D 2

Engendred ;

Had

Engendred, starts from the Productive Ashes
 Of his dead Syre: So sacred Records tell
 Thee, Great *Elijah*, Charioting to Heaven
 In Fiery Vehicle, thy Mantle drop'd
 Credential to *Elisba*, double Portion
 Of Warmth Diffusing, and Prophetic Rage.

How are Thy Looks disorder'd, Ghastly wan,
 Thy Eye-Balls Fiery-red, and Parch'd, and Blear'd,
Oxonia ? Parent *Alm*, Blest Residence
 Of Learning, Arts, Yclipt *Bellofistum*
 In ancient Story known; Methinks I hear
 Thy Generous Pity for Thy Son, Thy Moans
 Sad, and Disconsolate, on *Ihs* Banks,
 Delightful Bordering Stream ! Methinks I see
 Thy Grief surpassing all Excess of Grief.
 Emphatical. Not Sorrow more express

Or seisd the *Delian* God, or *Sylvan* Nymphs,
 When *Rodopeius* fell, to lustful Rage
 A Victim, torn by the furious Race
 Of *Bacchus*, and the wild *Ciconian* Rout
 Of Revellers, nor cou'd the Muse defend her Son :
 Seraphick *Orpheus* ! who first with mortal Hand
 Touch'd the Testacious Lyre, and taught to sing ;
 Who near the Streams of *Phlegeton* first breath'd
 Thy Chords, and by the Force of Number drew
Euridice from Hell, and smooth'd the Visage
 Of *Cerberus* Immane ; who stopp'd the Floods
 In prone Career, provok'd the list'ning Trees
 To saliant bounding Mores, and gently tam'd
 The bestial savage Race, with Musicks Notes
 Harmonious ; May thy Followers pursue
 Thy Steps, Ambitious, but thy Fate avoid.

O H---y ! may My Verſe awhile detain
 Thy Thoughts, tho' Waking for the Publick Good,
 To Verſe Obſequious : O St. J---n, lend an Ear
 Attentive, as whilom you're wont to do
 To Strains *Milronic* : My flagging Muſe before
 By Chilling Damps depreſt, and Nipping Cold,
 Cheer'd and Encourag'd by the Glimpſe of Favour
 'Gins to Enſoar Aloof, on Wings of Hope
 Aerial mounts, and burns with Fire Poetic.
 So ſtarv'ling Plant benumm'd by Winter Breme,
 Unkindly froward Season, recollects
 Freſh Vigour quick'ning, by the Genial Rays,
 Of the Revolving Sun, Re-animate.

But ſtop, O Headſtrong Muſe, Ungovernable !
 The Bard we 'wail beſt worthy to declare
 Our Chiefs renown'd in Council, or in Camp.

What

What Trophies wou'd he raise, Arches Triumphant,

To *H—y*, *Britain's* Hope, Aversion dire
 Of *Gaul* Aspiring? How describe his Worth,
 Concern for Common Good, Brain-racking Cares,
 And tedious sleepless Nights, his Condescension
 To all Mankind, an Open Soul, nor warp'd
 By lawless Gain, with Irretorted Eye
 Beholding Heaps of Gold, Deep-piercing Head,
 For Empires Weight Appropriate, Steddy Steerage
 In shocking Storms of State, Upholding Kingdoms
 By Schemes Unerring, and Advise ment sure?
 Deserving well of All, of Populace
 Applause, Favour of Prince, Retrieving
 From publick Debt Immense, the Nations Credit?
 How paint an *H—t* well-deciding, passing
 Verdict on ticklish Point, and Cause abstruse,

His

His Tongue with Rhetoric sleekt, His Musical
 Persuasive Winning Voice, even Melting those
 That lose their Cause, his tempering Law with
 Justice,
 Well ballast, and Inflexibly upright ?
 How wou'd he dwell on St. J——n Patriot Young,
 Untainted, Loyal, with the Charge entrusted
 Of *Anna's* sacred Secrets, deeply skill'd
 In all the study'd Arts of Peace and War ?
 O Unexampled ! Ripe beyond thy Years !
 Up-grown in early Dawn, to Manhood full,
 Authentick, already knowing more,
 Than others, or obtain in Hoary Age
 Fore-sighted, or *Nestor* Old in Council,
 Gain'd in three Centuries, long liv'd Experience,
 How Gild Illustrious O——d's long Descent,
 Plac'd on *Ierne's* Throne, True Representative,

Of Regal Majesty, Courtly Grandeur,
 Innate, Familiar, join'd with Easy Converse,
 And as his Arms, his Temper, All-subduing?
 How wou'd he tell a R—— Renown'd
 In Foreign Clime, for Conduct, Probity,
 Knowledge of Men, and Books, Repute Unblemish'd,
 Incapable of Stain, and Soul Extensive,
 Fram'd to Command, and for High Station fit?
 How sing, Thee, Br——, Whom th' Establish'd
 Church

Esteems, her Best of Sons, Whom List'ning Senate
 With Admiration hear, Discharging well
 Thy Trust of Vast Import?—— But Ann's Behests
 Her Princely Virtues, Clear-discerning Wisdom,
 Time-seas'ning Care, Considerate, nor Punishing
 Too soon th' Offender Guilty, nor too late
 Rewarding Meritorious Great Exploits!

Heav'n-

Heav'n-Chosen Queen! Her Zeal of Church
 Defendant,
 Her Generous Love for Human Race, Her Goodness
 Beyond Example High, from servile Yoke
 Emancipating, Curbing Power Tyrannic
 Superb with swelling Titles, and Elate
 With Epithets thick-laid, and Names August;
 Demand a Bard Transcendant, Elevate,
 Inspir'd with Heav'nly Rage, and more than Man:
 None of the Present Age, no forward Poet,
 Adventrous, and Embold'ned with Presumption,
 Assuming dares to sing, nor ought to Try
 With his Audacious Lays, *Philips* and *Smith*
 (A Pair Unequal to no Theme but This)
 Might venture to Attempt, but cou'd not Reach.

Whoe'er desirous is, to sport in Verse,
 Be this his first Concern, to Chuse a Subject

For purpose Meet, his Genius right Observe,
 Well-weighing, nor above his Strength pursue
 The Quarry, Over-eager, Theme Exalted
 Misleading him in Error, and Bewildring
 In the Eternal Maze of Lavish Thought.
 So Bird New-fledg'd with humble Pinnions hops
 From Spray, to Spray, secure, but scudding Bold
 The Welkin Inexplor'd, or falls a Prey
 To Hawk, or Kite, Rapacious, Boy Untoward
 In Persecution Sporting, or Confounded,
 Ranges thro' desert Wilds. So Coasting Skiff
 Sails dangerless, nor fearing *Humber's* Creeks,
 Or *Thames*, or *Severn's* Bays, but out of Sight
 Of Native *Albion's* Cliffs, is Lost, Amaz'd,
 On the Out-stretching Main *Atlantic*, Wide
 Space
 Of Nought but Horizontal Sea and Sky.

Thus

Thus *Virgil* tun'd his Eclogues, e'er his Muse
 Assum'd Heroic Flames, the Fore-sung Pair
 Playing with slender Toys, gain'd by Degrees
Parnassus's Forked Summit, Deathless Fame.
 O Happy Pair ! by Tuneful Choir Rever'd,
 Beatic, or *Chaucer*, or by *Spencer* Plac'd
 High, Unmolested, Joyous Stalk, or sit
 In mutual Converse, Contemplate, Meditate,
 In Fragrant Field Enamel'd, Cool Recess
 Of Grot, or Cave, or Hospitable Grove,
 With Armsaffording Shade, thick-Inter-wind;
 Where *Peleus* Son his *Patroclus* enjoys,
 Belov'd, and Loving, as the *Grecian* Bard
 Relates ; Where *Nisus* and *Euryalus*
 Lock'd in each others Arms, kindly Commune
 Together, by the Balmy Gales refresh'd,
 Near silent *Lethe's* Banks, in Friendly Parl.